



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONTROL



## FACT SHEET

### SAPC/DPSS – GENERAL RELIEF

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) and the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) have collaborated to help General Relief (GR) applicants/recipients with substance abuse problems recover from their chemical dependency. These two departments jointly developed the General Relief Mandatory Substance Abuse Recovery Program (MSARP) in Los Angeles County. It encourages personal responsibility by providing services to indigent adults who want to help themselves to reach self-sufficiency.

#### **HISTORY**

On June 3, 1997, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS) adopted an ordinance requiring General Relief (GR) applicants and recipients (18 and older indigent adults) to undergo screening for substance abuse if there is reasonable suspicion that the individual may be chemically dependent. The BOS further required that applicants and recipients screened and professionally evaluated to be in need of treatment must first participate in a treatment program as a condition of receiving GR benefits. The GR Mandatory Substance Abuse Recovery Program (MSARP) was implemented on November 1, 1997.

#### **THE PROGRAM**

All GR applicant/recipients are pre-screened for possible alcohol and other drug (AOD) dependency. DPSS conducts a pre-screening questionnaire to identify persons needing treatment. This pre-screening tool, the CAGE Aid Questionnaire includes four self-declaration questions. The responses to these questions, in conjunction with the interviewer's observations about the individual's behaviors and appearances are used to determine if there is reasonable suspicion of alcohol and/or drug dependency.

Additional supportive recovery services include transportation, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) advocacy, mental health evaluations, job development and vocational/educational training including work related expenses such as books, supplies, uniforms, tools, shoes, etc. through the General Relief Opportunity for Work (GROW) program.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

All GR applicants/recipients (employable or unemployable) who have been pre-screened and assessed as positive for substance abuse must participate in MSARP as a condition of eligibility to GR. Only those who meet the reasonable suspicion criteria will be referred to the CASC for assessment and referral to treatment.

Participants needing alcohol recovery or drug treatment services may access these programs directly by walking into the program requesting services, or by notifying a GR worker, GROW case manager, the CASC staff or by calling SAPC Hotline at (800) 564-6600.

#### **HOW DOES IT WORK**

DPSS pre-screens all GR applicants/recipients to identify persons needing treatment. Clients who appear to have a substance abuse problem are referred to the CASC for assessment and referral to treatment services at an SAPC GR contracted treatment program.

The CASC refers the client to the most appropriate modality of treatment which, may include detoxification, residential, outpatient, and AOD services. Day treatment services are also available for clients who need a more structured treatment recovery environment. Individuals' participation is tracked throughout the program by the CASC and updated on the Los Angeles Eligibility Automated Determination System (LEADER) DPSS tracking system.